

As of 12 November 2017



Asia-Europe Meeting - 5th ASEM Seminar on Nuclear Safety

Translating Commitments into Actions—

Addressing Nuclear Safety Challenges in the 21st Century

Concept Paper

(Proposed by China)

Background

Against the backdrop of the adoption of the Sustainable Development Goals and the entry into force of the Paris Agreement on climate change, with current rates of economic and growth, nuclear energy is expected to play an increasingly important role in ensuring energy supply, mitigating climate change and achieving sustainable development. Global use of nuclear power continues to grow, despite the Fukushima Daiichi accident six years ago. According to IAEA, as of July 2017, there are 447 operational nuclear power reactors in 30 countries and 60 are under construction in 15 countries, which rest mostly in Asia and Europe. Besides, another 30 countries are considering, planning or actively working to include nuclear energy in their energy mix.

Nuclear safety is crucial to the future of nuclear power, as a strong safety record is essential for its public acceptance. Remarkable progress has been made in strengthening national and regional nuclear safety in the past decades. Since the Fukushima Daiichi accident and the adoption of the IAEA Action Plan on Nuclear Safety in 2011, relevant measures have been implemented to upgrade nuclear safety worldwide. However, nuclear safety is an ongoing and never-ending process, much work remains to be done. Building on the past achievements, we are now at a new stage of further enhancing nuclear safety.

Besides the long-standing challenges stemming from natural hazards, the aging of nuclear facilities, decommissioning etc, special efforts and continued attention should be given to the following ongoing or new challenges. The regulatory oversight of the nuclear power plants needs to be improved, particularly with respect to verifying how relevant lessons arising from the Fukushima Daiichi accident are being implemented.

The newcomer countries are mostly in need of developing the necessary infrastructure and capacity to ensure nuclear safety. Acquiring and retaining skilled and competent workforce, strengthening safety in all phases of the nuclear facility life cycle are among the biggest challenges. Although nuclear safety remains the responsibility of each individual country, nuclear accidents can transcend national borders. There is a persistent demand from states for technical assistance and advice in strengthening national and regional emergency preparedness and response.

Nearly half of the ASEM members are operating nuclear power plants or embarking on nuclear power. Looking into the new challenges and opportunities and working to ensure sustainable nuclear safety remains on the ASEM agenda in recent years. Since 2012, ASEM seminars on nuclear safety were respectively held in Singapore, Lithuania, Indonesia and Spain, with themes on emergency preparedness and response, international instruments, nuclear safety infrastructure and knowledge management, which have greatly fostered exchanges and cooperation on nuclear safety among interested ASEM members.

Objectives

With the theme of "Translating Commitments into Actions-Addressing Nuclear Safety Challenges in the 21st Century", the main purpose of the 5th ASEM Seminar on Nuclear Safety is to provide a platform to continue discussions on the most prominent topics on nuclear safety identified by the previous seminars as well as the nuclear industry, so as to promote exchanges and cooperation among ASEM members.

This three-day seminar will bring together different stakeholders and focus on new opportunities and challenges since Fukushima accident, nuclear safety oversight, industry practice, capacity building, emergency preparedness and response, share lessons learned and exchange best practices, and work together to identify current priority needs and explore plausible ways to address the ongoing and new challenges.

Format and topics of discussions

The ASEM members and invited speakers are expected to deliver presentations on the proposed plenary sessions. Please see the attached tentative agenda.

Programme, Date & Venue

The seminar will be held in Beijing on 28-30 March 2018. It will be organized by the Ministry of Foreign Affairs (MFA), Ministry of Environmental Protection (MEP), and China Atomic Energy Agency (CAEA). The detailed programme for the seminar will be circulated at a later date.

The seminar will be held back to back with the biennial China International Nuclear Industry Exhibition (NIC 2018) on 28-31 March at the China National Convention Centre. Over the past two decades, NIC has become one of the world's largest and most famous nuclear exhibition of its kind in international nuclear industry sector. Seminar

participants are also encouraged to visit the Exhibition.

Participation

The Seminar seeks to gather a wide range of participants from ASEM members, including government officials and policy-makers, practitioners, researchers and experts, representatives from nuclear industry and related regional and international organizations.

Co-Sponsors

All ASEM members are welcome to co-sponsor this event. Co-sponsors could send representatives to speak at the seminar, make contributions to the concept paper and programme, and work together with the host country on inviting keynote speakers. Co-sponsors are welcome to provide financial support to the seminar on voluntary basis. As of 12 November, Finland, Hungary, Lithuania, Singapore and Spain have confirmed their willingness to be the co-sponsors.

Expenses

The venue and organization will be handled by the host country. Travel and accommodation costs shall be covered by the participants.

Contacts

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